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To A. H. Cannon, Esqr.

with the kind regards of his friend

The Author.

August 13th 1850.

(Nicholson)
NBI

POEMS OF THE HEART.

BY

GEORGE W. S. NICHOLSON,

AUTHOR OF "A BUDGET OF YOUTHFUL FANCY."

PHILADELPHIA:

G. S. APPLETON, S. E. COR. SEVENTH AND CHESTNUT STS.

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PREFACE.

THIS is the last production of my boyhood. Since my initiation into the pleasing paradise of the Muses, Poetry, with me, has been an intoxicating pleasure, a mad delight, to the detriment of my pursuing the sterner studies of life, so that I might be enabled to more successfully battle with the cold, the heartless, the striving world.

In this age of literature, when it is the task of a lengthened lifetime to read the almost innumerable works of erudition and science in our vernacular tongue alone; and when all the avenues of the press are thronged, flooded by

aspiring applicants, it is next to impossible for an author of the present day to even hope to sustain existence by the bare, meagre products of his pen.

When I shall have prepared myself for the emergencies of life by gaining some solid, grave profession, then, provided the patrons of poetry encourage the flight of my young Muse, I may cull the bright gems of thought, which, like golden grains of rust, shall have accumulated on the volume of my pen; and with the sharpened point of experience, weave them in the loom of fancy, crossed with the threads of imagination, interspersed with the flowers of originality, into a decorated robe of poetry, meet for the eye of an amateur.

What I have written was not from any sordid desire of gain, nor from any ambitious motives; but merely to relieve a fanciful, laboring

imagination, of its effervescent ebulliency. Often have I sat, with my gaze fixed into the depths of my soul, heeding nothing, until my thoughts, teeming fresh from my heart, were lying dormant on the sheet before me. The ideas, somehow, would come, and there would be no rest for my spirit; they would be continually recurring to my inward gaze, till I had banished them from my exuberant brain to the precinct of my scrap-book; there to remain, mingling with their associate fellows, till ferreted out by some kind, curious friend, who, taking a copy, would exhibit them to others; and—now the tug—they desire other copies, until it is almost by sheer compulsion that I am constrained to publish these friends and companions of my heart.

This is an excuse (not apologetic) for my introducing this work to the reader, to whom I may be, personally, a stranger.

DEDICATION.

TO MY FATHER.

To thee, my father, while I sing
A joyous, happy strain,
With filial love and pride I bring
These children of my brain.

When morning, risen but anew,
Had donn'd her golden crest,
I've pluck'd these jewels from the dew,
And hugg'd them to my breast.

Then up the mountain with my staff,
I oft to crags did cling,
And gather'd with a childish laugh
The firstlings of the Spring.

And when the glorious orb of day
Cast his first streak of light,
I've watch'd the songsters soar away,
And join'd them in their flight.

Then, when their mates called from the sky
These warblers of the plain,
I've sought to catch each lonely sigh,
And versify the strain.

And from the flowers in the vale,
In varied colors wrought,
While sweetest essence I'd inhale,
I've cull'd full many a thought.

And with some old, forgotten song,
When other eyes have slept,
I've lengthen'd out the night full long,
And for the hero wept.

These gems, and flowers, and buds of thought,
Fresh from the muse's bower,
To thee, my father, have I brought,
To while some passing hour.

'Twas Nature, with her charming grace,
Loved sister of my soul!
Who first essay'd my pen to trace
The poet's pleasing scroll.

Oh, thou, the parent of my birth!
Whose precepts I have kept,
Altho' intrinsic be their worth,
These buds I pray accept.

CHILDHOOD.

My birth place the city, proud Queen of the West,
Half rear'd in the hills of Virginia blest:
Doom'd o'er the world in fancy to roam,
My heart in one place, a chaos my home.

NEW SONG.

BELOVED Age! by mem'ry loved through life,
Undimm'd by tears of anguish, free from strife;
Impetuous as the brook but new released
From ice-bound beds, by drifting snows increased;

A morning sunbeam in a forest wood,
Where hyacinths and violets are strew'd!
Thou art the fount of Fancy: golden scenes
With silver fringed; and azure tinted greens;
The future castellated with delight,
And fame, and glory burst upon thy sight.
I gaze into the mirror of my mind:
In Childhood's hallow'd corner there I find
The silver morn of mem'ry: I behold
Its bright and brilliant picture, fringed with gold.
'Tis sweet to draw the curtain of the past:
Behold the scenes of Childhood, time amass'd.
In glorious visions bright, by Nature taught,
Fond retrospection to my soul has brought—
While mem'ry, ever dear, doth now engage
To ope the portals wide of Childhood's page—
The loved, remember'd scenes of boyhood's hours,
The ideal scenes, the Elysian fields of flowers,
Bedabbled, orient in the sun, with dew—
Past visions bubbling on my fancy's view.

Blest childhood! happy in thy innocence,
In close embrace all future views condense,

And shed a halo of delight around
The bosom of thy breast, with leaping bound.
Hope, with her glorious visions, peopling space,
Illumines all the radiance of thy face:
No cares find harbor in thy wavy breast;
No dreams of future wo disturb thy rest;
But meek-eyed Peace bides ever in thy heart,
And sweet Contentment drowns affliction's smart.
Bright dreams of glory weave around thy fate,
Light up thy youthful fires with joy elate,
And swelling pleasures sparkle in thine eyes,
And glow in gleams of present paradise.
Thy smiles are soft as May-day morning beams,
And fairy fays waft Heaven unto thy dreams;
Thy tears are pearls; the fount is sooner dried
Than April show'rs on the gentle, hilly side.

Affection, Friendship unalloy'd, is born
Of Childhood, cradled in the lap of morn:
Life may be sweet, but when gray, winter'd Age
Reverts with trembling fingers Friendship's page,
He finds there none so lasting, fond and true,
As friends in Childhood form'd, when life was new;

Though some prove false, he plaints with no regret,
But joys with mem'ry, and he loves them yet.
Experience often turns to Manhood's birth,
And fondly gazes—ne'er of lesser worth;
He sees gay youths in circle cluster'd round,
Who make the woods with life-like mirth resound,
Like nymphs of showers tripping through the vale,
Leaving bright beauty in their sweeping trail;
His dear companions, some tempestuous hurl'd,
And others gone, their youthful pinions furl'd;
He smiles on dreams that wore the guise of Truth—
A hallow'd scene! gray Age smiling upon Youth.

The artist loves his sculptur'd scenes to view,
And smiles upon the first his pencil drew;
Yet more he cannot love than I to gaze
Upon the absent scenes of Boyhood's days:
Redundant with romantic forms, they fly
Athwart my vision, sparkle in mine eye.
Oh! that I were a boy again, to pass
Through life a boy, surfaced as polish'd glass.

In Childhood how I lov'd the mellow light
Of evening's heavenly meteors, twinkling bright;
I marvell'd; wond'ring on the azure deep,
Till, lost in fancy, I would sink to sleep;
And I would strain my infant spirit's sense
With marbled orbits, glorified immense:
How strange it was, the moon, the stars should wear
Such brilliant beauty, swinging in the air.
On Luna's soothing face I'd gaze and weep,
And bid her angels guard me while I'd sleep:
My soul in dreams would fly to her on high,
And roam in fields of ether through the sky;
And little cherubs were my playmates there,
We'd gambol, frisk and tumble in the air;
And yet I'd wake to find 'twas all a dream,
And on my casement still the silvery beam,
Filling the primrose with its sister light,
Till drops of dew jump'd in to see the sight.
And then methought the tiny stars above
Were eyes of little seraphs full of love;
And I would image Psyches to my mind,
Their angel pinions o'er my couch entwined.

And thus would pass my nights in dreams of love:
For then I knew no fear of mighty Jove.

Swell on my fancy memory's cherish'd dreams:
Once more I wander by the woodland streams;
Again I sport in fancy on the lawn,
As I was wont long absent days agone;
Enraptur'd with delight I cull the flowers,
And revel, childlike, 'midst the rosy bowers;
Again I weave a chaplet for the moon;
With perfumed roses all my paths adorn;
With tripping feet I startle from its nest
The burrow'd ground rat, with its velvet crest;
And from the thick-hedg'd woods I hear
The merry songsters singing loud and clear;
I give my soul to joy a loosen'd rein,
And echo back the warblers of the plain;
The lark begins, arrested in its flight,
Till all the woods re-echo with delight.
When merry Spring comes laughing through the vale,
I grasp my books, and dash into the dale;—

The spring of life 's unfolded to my view—
And sportive from the rose I brush the dew,
Press lightly on the daisy, childhood's flower,
So meekly smiling, peeping from its bower.

I love to loiter in the vernal glade,
And sport with Music, Heaven inspired maid;
And watch the mist uprising from the hills,
Thick cluster'd with perfume from rippling rills,
Till, ether lost, it stretches 'long the sky,
And leaves my soul to stern reality.
I linger: in the distance, looming out,
I hear my fellow schoolmate's playful shout:
The schoolhouse, with its weather-beaten front,
Loved, hallow'd place! is erudition's fount.
The schoolboys romp upon the mossy sward,
And strive to gain the victor's proud reward;
Some clamor loudly at the marbles' fray;
Some stand demure; light hearted, others play;
Their echoing voices borne along the air,
To seek their home in some far distant star;

Some on the placid lake their vessel slip:—
How like is childhood to that trembling ship.
A little while 'tis fill'd with gallant life;
Wind comes—Age comes: 'tis lost amid the strife!
There stands the master pensive in the door,
Looking science at the children, mighty lore:
What thoughts are stirring in his bosom now?
He smiles awhile: it vanishes: his brow
Looks gloomy: I can see the furrows here;
And down his cheek there rolls the silent tear.
He ponders on the hopes of youth, the sweet,
Illusive dreams, the care-worn soul's retreat:—
Manhood comes dashing on—Ambition wields
The iron-knotted sceptre; void of shields,
Against the tempest-riven shore he's hurl'd,
To battle with the breakers of the world;
And plodding Reason, shrinks aback before
The frenzy of the blood-shot eye; no more
His guardian angels hover round his path;
Unmeet to strive 'gainst passion, worldly wrath,
Without a guide; without a beacon flame,
Save, lone, the ever changing star of Fame,

He dashes heedless through the roaring waves,
The fury of a low'ring sky he braves;
Forlorn of friends; bereft his Childhood's home,
He steers his shatter'd bark through blacken'd foam,
To glimpse at glory: should he live forsooth,
He casts one longing gaze, and wists for youth.

The schoolboy should be happy—shout with glee;
Could he one page of Childhood's future see,
And all of manhood's anguish, wo, behold,
He'd prize each moment now as grains of gold:
Yet sometimes trivial troubles will o'ershroud;
Ne'er rose and set the sun without a cloud;
The fairest days may end in storm and rain,
And meet it is that Childhood should have pain,
The transient stinging of a pricking pin—
Not such as wears down manhood pale and thin.
We are our own posterity: as bends
The child in youth, so graver manhood wends.

Let Childhood heap up knowledge in amount,
Drink holy draughts from Wisdom's mighty fount,
And court dame Fortune while she smiles in peace,
That Age may turn to thee to seek surcease;
If this thou dost, content will be thy noon,
And gray-hair'd Age and Childhood be but one.

SECOND SPRING.

THE Spring, the gentle, budding Spring,
With genial airs, and lowing herds;
With silvery songs from dancing birds,
That make the new-fledged forests ring,
And Nature clothed in verdant sheen;
The far-stretch'd fields with dappled green;
The rippling brooks with swelling flow,
That bear away the Winter's snow,
And lash their banks,
With plashing pranks,

Like boys just bursting from their school,
Who bid farewell to tyrant rule;—
And cool, refreshing rain
From dew-dipp'd clouds have come again.
I love thee, Spring, with all thy flowers,
Thy verdure and thy rosy bowers;
Thou speak'st of days long absent gone,
That mem'ry joys to dwell upon,
When through thy forests widely spread,
Thy shaded nooks,
And by thy brooks,
I roam'd with one—alas! who's dead.
'Tis past! the hope of youth has fled,
All smiles, all joys, all hopes are dead;
Long years those treasures I'd amass'd,
When days were bright,
When hearts were light;
When fortune, with a placid face
Lit up my youth with comely grace;
But all have perish'd with the blast.
I stand within a sea of moan;

The waves of trouble lash my brow—
Strike terror through my crested prow;
But one dark swell more fiercely blown—
The wave of hopeless grief—
Has hurl'd me on a rock-bound reef,
A black, unfathomable place,
Where fiends are grinning in grimace,
Where wander on the barren wastes
The restless forms of myriad hosts,
Who laugh and dance, a ghostly train,
While mournful dirges swell the air,
And gnash their teeth with endless pain,
Then cast them groaning in the pit,
To seek surcease where mad Despair
And Grief and Death together sit.
I gaze ahead, and all is gloom;
My soul is buried in the tomb,
A coffin'd gate through which the soul
Departs to endless life,
Away from worldly strife;
Or 's doom'd in endless woe to roll.

The rose, I oft had clasp'd in pride,
Has droop'd and faded by my side;
The fairest of the Summer's flowers,
So slight and frail,
Borne down to earth with Autumn's showers
And blustering gale:
Came Spring—I lov'd her in her pride;
Came Summer—and she was my bride;
Came Autumn—and she droop'd and died:
Oh, Shade of Death, grant me release,
And let these racking torments cease,
And rest my soul in peace!
Shine on, thou changeful, watchful moon!
Cast mildly on her grave,
Where tender lillies wave,
Thy mellow tints of light; for soon
My silken threads of life will sever—
My light be dimm'd and gone forever.
'Twas once mine eyes could weep,
And let the tear-drops sweep
In many a wrinkled streak
Unheeded o'er my cheek;

And large, clear pearl drops sparkled bright
Upon the lashes of my sight,
Like diamonds glistening in the night;
And, constant dropping, they did trace,
Till furrow'd channels groov'd my face;
But now—Oh! say not now;
Cast but one glance upon my brow,
Mark well, and read its wrinkled page,
That's withered with untimely age;
And see my whiten'd locks of hair
Stream flaxen-like into the air;
Behold the wreck that *now* foretells;—
I strain the fountain to its cells,
And dig the essence of a sigh
To moist my parch'd and bloodshot eye;
I press my bosom—press my heart,
Till drops of life-blood gurgling start.
Oh, yes! I lov'd her madly well,
As this frail form alone can tell;
Came Death, and stole my rose away,
And took my light of life away,
But left me gloom and dread dismay.

And this is life; delusive joys!
Like clouds within a windy sky;
And men are made to passion toys,
They hope, possess, despair, and die;
Our youth is fickle, man is frail,
As flowers in the Autumn gale.—
Still Nature bears me back to youth,
The spring of life, its paths all smooth;
I still lament, and ever strike
My mournful harpstrings tun'd alike,
So solemn is its tone,
I sigh, but sigh alone:
And there is misery in thought,
By retrospection madness wrought,
To have the drooping buds of hope,
When time had giv'n their leaves full scope,
Together folding to enroll,
And wrap their meshes round the soul:
What grief, what pain, oh! what despair
Are cluster'd in my bosom's lair;
The agony of mind
In hopeless grief confin'd.

Yet sometimes in my ravings wild
A ray of hope will steal,
With many a quicken'd start,
Into my compass'd heart,
And shed its calm, so gently mild;
And bid me burst the seal—
Unfold the crescent leaves of grief,
That weigh my soul
With dread control—
Let all my wo be hurl'd
Back to its mother world:
And give my bursting heart relief.
I mingle with the world—with life;
I see a husband lose his wife,
Parts death the child and mother,
The sister and the brother;
The lover digs his lost one's grave;—
They loved not, or, like me, they'd rave;
They dry their tears—they smile on fate;
Perchance they seek another mate;
But I with grief did waste my breath—
Am drooping, drooping down to death.

Avaunt! I'll be a second man,
And learn from men to calmly scan
The face of trouble in the brow;
I'll smile at grief;—forget my vow,
And, tho' my heart, my life it clasp,
The storm of anguish will I grasp;
  I'll blind it from mine eye;—
  I'll blind it, tho' I die;
The crescent leaves of grief I'll thrust,
I'll crumble, crumble them to dust:
'Twere better thus to die—to root
My passion ere it bears its fruit.
'Tis strange that I of manhood brave,
Should be to weakness such a slave.
Yet, no! my soul must still lament,
  And I must let this sadness weave
Its shreds of weather-proof cement,
  And madly let my spirit grieve,
Grieve, while my soul's with phrenzy tost.
For her, alas! untimely lost,
I rave! can I forget to live?
Can I procure the fabled sieve

Of dim forgetfulness.
And through the wires my mem'ry press—
Drop, shift and shake the leaden ore
Till recollection be no more.
And can I sway my midnight dreams,
Where one pale face forever teems,
And beckons me unto the grave?
If so, then I will cease to rave.
Oh! well do I remind each smile
Was wont my fortune to beguile;
When first the heavenly light
Of love, broke on my sight—
Too happy days!—
My rapturous gaze!
As arm in arm, and hand in hand
We wander'd joyous on the strand;
The pealing of the marriage bells,
Arousing music from her cells;
And then the solemn, leaden toll,
Proclaiming dead another soul;
My wanderings through the lonely glade
When Winter stripp'd the earth of shade,

No one to cheer—no one to guide
My faltering footsteps to my bride:
No, not for me her love, her breath,
She lies a corpse—the bride of Death;
I took no note of time; it left
Me palsied, left me reason reft:
A chaos filled my brain:
Insensible to pain
I lay for days, for months of time;
I soar'd away to worlds sublime;
'Mid angels in the skies above
I saw my long-lost, earthly love;
But oh! how bright,
What dazzling light
Encompass'd her, as on she moved,
And smiled on me, the one she loved;
I spread my out-stretch'd arms to clasp
Her form—embrace her in my grasp;
But ere I had my wish, they hurl'd
Me downward to a groaning world:
I woke to find the vision gone,
Left cheerless, friendless—left alone.

For me may come and go the Spring;
The rippling brooks may laugh and leap,
And merry time their flowings keep:
For me the dancing birds may sing,
May swell their throats
With silvery notes,
From bough to bough may chirp and laugh,
Intoxicating pleasure quaff;
Their vernal robes the fields may stretch,
And I, from zephyrs, music catch;
For me the flowers may waft perfume,
And essence sweet
My senses greet;
The cooling dew from rosy bowers
May lave my heated brow with showers;
I heed them not; for, steep'd in gloom
My mind, my soul no pleasures move;
But, chain'd till death to exiled love,
I'll dig from out my heart one sigh;
And, blasted like the stricken oak,
I'll sink beneath the harden'd stroke;—
I'll waste my life—triumphant die—
A victim to Despondency.

THE BRIGAND'S DAUGHTER.

THE BRIGAND'S DAUGHTER.

PART I.

INTRODUCTION.

THE night winds whistled murky past,
And blew a gale in every blast;
And by the fading light of day
The shrieking condor call'd his prey;

And from full many a craggy height
The jaguar's howl broke on the night,
When slowly up the mountain way
A band of Northmen, in array,
Along the precipice's bank
Pursued their march, rank after rank:
Some two score warriors, young and old,
Each mounted on a war-horse bold,
And gleaming with their steel and gold,
In silence onward toil'd their march,
Now 'neath some overhanging arch,
Now on the slippery, slimy edge
Of some dark cavern's dreary ledge,
Now wending through some barren dale,
Where loud the owlets hoot and wail;
But riding foremost in the band,
Upon a charger nobly grand,
That paws the stones within his path,
And beats them down in furious wrath,
The chieftain, with his youthful front,
And brow scarce sear'd by battle's brunt,
Is bravely leading on his men
O'er hill and dale, and gloomy glen.

Still onward over rock and crag
With stealthy pace the troopers drag;
Until at last the warlike train
Emerges in a woody plain;
Scarce have they enter'd in the copse
Before the chieftain's charger stops,
And, stamping 'neath his feet the ground,
Glares wildly in the hedges round;
And, with his nostrils in the air,
Betokens some foul, lurking lair.
"Back!" cried the chieftain to his men,
"In lines form quickly, ten by ten;
We've broke upon some brigand's gorge:
Now gather round, and onward charge."
His words had broke the silent spell:
Now from each thicket in the dell
Arose a loud and lengthen'd yell;
And as the troopers onward rush
They meet a spear in every bush:
Now hand to hand their arms engage,
And fiercely does the battle rage;
And long and loud the sound of strife
Proclaims the work of death is rife.

The chieftain on his noble steed
Now rushes on with maddened speed;
And as he through the brigands press'd
Full many a spear is at his breast;
His body slightly backward bends,
And with his trusty sword he sends
A thousand fragments in the air,
And leaves the front of weapons bare.
Now shouting loudly to his men,
Until the echoes ring again,
He dashes through the bold redoubt,
And scatters heads like balls about;—
But see! his charger droops his head,
And groaning, drops beneath him dead:
And now the grim guerilla chief
Is fronting him in bold relief,
With giant form and sword of ill,
And eye that tells his iron will,
With brow whose wrinkled, ruffled page
Foretells the lion in his cage.
Such was the man as there he stood,
Who fain would reek his blade in blood:

Now wildly gleams his bloodshot eye ;—
He wields his iron sword on high—
Down comes the hissing, thirsty blade,
And flashes through the dreary glade ;
But, ha ! our chieftain meets him there,
With sword unsheath'd and weapon bare.
And now with hilt to hilt they close,
Together parry blows on blows ;
Now comes the tug of mortal strife,
Each striving fiercely life for life :
The brigand with his giant strength
Gains inch by inch his falchion's length ;
And pressing on the chieftain hard
His bosom leaves without a guard—
The chieftain's sword is at his breast ;
But on the mail beneath his vest
It shivers with the weighty blow,
And leaves him swordless 'fore his foe :
Now backward on his prostrate horse
He sinks beneath the brigand's force ;
And on the clotted, bloody ground
His pinion'd form lies firmly bound.

There lies the chieftain when his troop
Sweeps by him with victorious whoop;
They leave their fallen chief behind,
Whose shouts are borne along the wind;
They, safe themselves, reck not of one,
Who lies defenceless overthrown.

The brigand chief comes creeping near,
And sounds his whistle shrill and clear;
Then quickly round about him stand
The blood-stained faces of his band,
Exulting with ferocious eyes
Upon their prostrate, captured prize;
Then, with their chieftain's silent sign,
They rank their bodies in a line,
And, lifting up their captive's form,
Pursue their way without alarm.
The brigand mutters with a smile,
"This one will serve us for a while;
And, by my leaping falchion's clank,
A captain is this captive's rank;
The ransom shall be dearly paid
Who would to him bestow their aid."

Along the mountain's rugged side
They swiftly to their castle glide:
While far below a ridgy train
Of hills stretch out their lengthen'd chain;
And here and there the valleys deep
Tell where the flowing rivers sweep;
And now the falling waters roar,
As down the dizzy heights they pour,
And from their struggling, groaning tomb
Is cast on high a cloud of foam:
Still pass they on with measured tread
Until their castle rears its head,
And from its lofty height looks down
With blacken'd front and gloomy frown;
And, as against the deep blue sky
It swells out boldly from on high,
Far down the rugged mountain's side
It casts its shadows far and wide.
The brigands reach the massive gate,
And loudly on its iron plate
They make their butted falchions ring,
Unitl its foldings open swing;

And to the pinion'd captive's view
Unfolds within its gloomy hue.
Then straightway with a triple guard
They cast him in a dungeon barr'd;
Its desolation all around,
Its bed of straw upon the ground,
Its eye-like windows far apart,
With thick-set bars weigh down his heart.
Oh, for one true and trusty sword
To hew his way from out the horde!

The brigands now with wine and jests
Are stilling down their guilty breasts;
But silently their surly chief
Sits, looking like a wither'd leaf;
His vacant stare, his brow betray
His secret thoughts are far away:
He touches wine nor touches cup,
Nor of the viands does he sup;
But when each brigand from his chair
Rolls on the floor with drunken air
He casts on them a secret smile
Of mingled scorn and guilty guile.

PART II.

WAS ever yet a mortal eye,
So lost to passion's power,
Who has not wept at Beauty's sigh,
Nor revel'd in her bower.
Whose soul has not within him stirr'd,
Whose very heart-strings have not fired
When witnessing the dropping tear
From some fair angel of this sphere?
If such there be upon this earth
With all my soul I pity thee:
'Twere better thou did'st never see
The light of life break on thy birth,
Than live to be a wretch so hard,
A soul unhonor'd and abhor'd;
Back to the earth, thou groveling worm!
And cast not shame on mortal form.

Mankind should bow to Beauty's power,
As doth the tall and proud sun-flower
Yield homage to the Eye of Heaven,
  Where through the open, rounded space
Is dazzling glory brightly driven,
  To cast on earth's dark sinful face
  A promise of redeeming grace.

Oh! Solitude, sweet is thy rest;
Thou art a welcome, happy guest,
When from the turmoil of the crowd,
Within thy sanctuary bow'd,
To thought sublime my soul I yield,
And revel in a fairy field;
But when with Beauty, all alone,
Thou shar'st the silence of thy throne,
And catchest every tone of mirth,
Thou art a paradise on earth.

'Twas at the midnight hour,
When lonely in her tower

Young Zella, bright as any marigold,
The daughter of the brigand bold,
Reclined upon her velvet couch,
Whose silken softness to the touch
Surpass'd in texture wondrous fine
The snowy down of swans divine.
The wealth of Indies strew'd around,
Seem'd sparkling in a maze of light;
While not a breath of air, nor sound
Disturb'd the holy calm of night:
And 'neath a fair Madonna chaste,
Upon an altar laid with gold—
A relic of exquisite mould—
A cross of ebony was placed;
And vases, fill'd with buds in bloom,
Cast sweetly out their rich perfume:
And old-time portraits, 'most decay'd,
Seem'd from their lengthened sleep to rouse,
And twisted up their wrinkled brows
To cast one look where Zella laid,
And smile upon the beauteous maid;

But, as the night before the day
Sinks to its haven far away,
The grim old warriors' transient sight
Was blinded by the maiden's light;
Yet 'round their lips a smile still play'd,
For Beauty cast one pleasing dart,
And touch'd the tendons of each heart.

'Twere some old master's pleasing part
To carve the choicest of his art,
A model work, a form divine,
An angel should be his design,
The heavenly radiance of whose face
Should teem with ev'ry lovely grace;
Beneath the forehead he should trace
A brow whose curve should shame the shell;
And in its concave there should dwell
Of pearl-like brilliancy an eye,
Like sunset in a blue-tinged sky;
Her rosebud lips should rubies seem,
And put the blushing rose to shame;
With melting softness they should teem,
And fire the soul with passion's flame:

And, when this angel-form was made,
The God of Life should lend his aid;
And mortal breath he should bestow,
And cause her veins to ebb and flow;
And bright tho' be this maiden's sheen
(Yet Zella still would reign her queen,)
With her majestic, regal mien.
Rich raven ringlets, curling 'round,
Hang waving on her neck with grace,
And deck the radiance of her face,
Where Beauty's mildness does abound:
Her starlike eyes shine sparkling bright,
And glow her path with brilliant light;
Should all the jewels of the sea
Concenter their bright brilliancy
They could not shed more mild a ray,
Nor greater purity display;
Like the bright seraphims above,
So Zella's form was love, all love;
'Twere but to gaze upon her eyes
To madly love, to idolize.

When young she lost her mother dear,
And lost with her affection's tear:
And, sent within a distant land,
Was guided by a stranger's hand;
But then her soul, all innocence,
Was train'd in purity intense;
But, oh! she shudder'd at her fate,
That she should be a brigand's mate:
'Twas helpless Beauty in distress,
Longing a mother's fond caress.

But from her sweet and mild repose
With vacant air she lightly rose.
The silence now her footsteps break,
And lightly o'er the carpets trip
As when the evening zephyrs skip
The smooth, unruffled mountain lake;
An angel in her lovely guise,
Seem'd rising out of Paradise,—
And bending humbly low her knee
'Neath her Madonna's guardian care,

Chaste emblem of her purity—
She breath'd on high a fervent prayer.

Thus was she 'fore her altar bent,
On soothing prayer her soul intent,
When Bertha came, her chambermaid,
Whose brunette face her birth betray'd:
But Zella seated on the floor,
Unwittingly her lips did move,
"I fear," said she, "my peace is o'er,
No one is here for me to love."

"Oh! say not so," her maid did cry,
"You still have Bertha by your side,
Dry up each tear within your eye,
And to your maid your woes confide."

"You know my father, Bertha dear,
And his companions ever near;
And this he tells me is my fate,
That I'm to be a brigand's mate,

A loathsome, murderous brigand's bride;
Oh! would that I had rather died
An infant at my mother's breast;
Then would my spirit find its rest,
Than be a puppet to the will
Of one who knows but deeds of ill;
Yet to the parent of my birth
I'll yield my life, my woman's worth.
You know it was but yesterday
For years I had beheld his face;
And now my soul, fill'd with dismay,
Seeks to escape from this vile place."

"Hist! not so loud, sweet Zella, dear,
For fear thy father should be near;
But now he pass'd the castle's gate;
And by the torch's fitful light
Within the middle of the band
I saw a fetter'd captive stand;
And, as he pass'd the dungeon's grate,
I saw his epaulettes shine bright;

And they, all sparkling with their geld,
Were like the ones I once beheld,
When we had stopp'd at Monterey,
On that young captain, you remind,
Who, wounded in the battle's fray,
Was nurs'd by you, so gently kind."

"Ha! say you so, then quick, a light;
And bide without till I return."
Then pushing up a mirror bright
Disclosed a passage grim and stern;
Hope banished from her breast her grief—
Instill'd its soothing, calm relief.
Now Zella glides along the walls,
Where long and loud the echo calls;
Yet light her fairy footstep falls,
And yields a muffled sound;
The chill, damp air around
Sends shudders through her tender frame,
And flick and flare the trembling flame:
Then winding down the dark descent,

Through devious wendings cold and damp,
No light except her gleaming lamp,
Still down and downwards Zella went
On steps of hard and aged cement:
The lamp-light gleaming o'er her head,
And casting far away
Its ghost-like gloatings scarlet red,
Which 'round the jutments play.
At length she paused before a door,
And still'd her beating, sounding breath,
Save which the silence was like death,—
And dropp'd her gaze unto the floor;
Then seem'd to be engaged in thought—
In some bright dream of fancy wrought;
But soon she raised her lustrous gaze;
And with a spring the door slid back,
Unfolding front a dungeon black,
While through the darkness stream'd the rays.

Then gath'ring up the flowing robe,
And while her pulses wildly throb,

She softly through the dungeon crept
To where the captive soundly slept;
And fondly gaz'd upon his face,
  On which had nature placed her seal
    For nobleness and honor'd worth,
    Tho' manhood there was in its birth:
    The warlike garments, martial crest,
    The blue surtout, the crimson vest,
  The eagle button'd band, reveal
A chieftain of the northern race.
Stretch'd on the humid straw he lay,
  And, tho' with danger all around,
  He gave his soul to sleep profound,
And banish'd trouble for its sway:
And Zella, kneeling by his side,
Caught every murmur as he sigh'd:
And watch'd each dreaming, smiling glance,
That lit his features in his trance,
As some bright dream of mem'ry blest
Disturb'd his slumbering, caregone rest,
And every wrinkle in his brow,
  As in his changing dream

He thought him at his troopers' prow,
'Mid war and battle's stream,
Where deadly weapons flash and gleam.

How Zella's bosom rose and fell,
And heaved with joy and rapture wild;
In vain she still'd its rising swell,
Not to disturb his slumbers mild,
She wish'd, yet fear'd for him to wake,
For love, the little witching rake,
Had raised a tempest in her breast,
And caus'd her face to flush with bloom;
And love and fear in a contest
Were striving each to overcome:
These words she whisper'd to her mind,
"What chance has brought Lenardo here,
He, whom I left far, far behind,
And left with him my love sincere,
Immur'd within this deadly hive,
Whence none have ever pass'd alive;
But see! his mind seems to revive:

His breathings, soft as snowy flakes,
In lighter murmurs quicker flow;
His cheeks with blushes seem to glow;
He sighs; he turns; he starts; he wakes!

Lenardo wildly gaz'd around
Upon the walls, then on the ground;
An instant, as he turned his sight,
His eyes were blinded by the light,
But then he caught the witching rays
Of Zella's upturn'd rapturous gaze;—
"My lov'd, lost Zella, thou too here,"—
"But for thy weal, Lenardo dear."
He clasp'd her to his beating heart,
And told by silence what nor art
Nor gifted accents could impart;
Her half expectant lips he kiss'd;
And closer in his fond embrace
He press'd each charm, each glowing grace;
And gaz'd upon her placid face,
Where love and innocence exist.

As to his future fate all fear
  Was in that blissful moment gone:
'Tho in a dungeon still sweet cheer,
  The very life of love was drawn.
Triumphant love! we all must feel
Thy sweeten'd pain, tho' ribb'd in steel;
Time hath no power over love;
In vain its fleet-like chariots move,
Forever beams the star of hope—
Successfully with time to cope.
"This is nor time nor fitting place,"
She said, and slid from his embrace,
"For us to spend in this delight:
My father holds a feast to night,
Ere long the day will overtake,
His revelry he then will break;
Then let us not these moments waste,
But from the castle thou must haste."
"My angel, were I not Lenardo brave,
I willingly would be thy slave—
My sweet preserver, be my guide."

She pass'd with him the secret slide,
And up the narrow passage hied:
Then from her chamber, swift and fleet
They took their way with stealthy feet;
And by the brigand's feasting hall
They swiftly glided 'long the wall,
While loud within the roar of mirth
Gave freedom to their passage forth.

With wild excitement still they speed
The halls and galleries in haste;
No sentinels their path impede,
For all have join'd the rev'lers' feast.
Through ruined arches, lofty halls,
They seek the shadow of the walls;
Down windings steep and intricate
They reach secure the postern gate;
Now Zella, handing him the key,
Bids her Lenardo haste, to flee;
And when the sun shall light the sky,
To meet her there to save—to fly.

She droops her head upon his breast,
Which fain would ever there to dwell;
And tho' the light peeps from the East,
She cannot speak the sad farewell.
Awhile Lenardo lingers there,
Loth to depart, yet still must go:
Again his lips have kiss'd her brow,
Of snow-like fairness, pure as air:
Once more he folds her slender waist;
Once more she bids him haste, oh, haste!
And with a sigh long, low, and deep,
He rushes headlong down the steep.
She totter'd forward—bade him stay,
But Echo answer'd far away;
And then her tears with passion's force,
In streams along her cheeks did course;
And, anguishing, she cried, "he's gone;
Again I'm left; and left alone."

PART III.

WHENE'ER the heart—the gentle heart
Is bow'd beneath affliction's yoke;
And pleaures from the bosom part,
Like summer's foliage from the oak;
And when the dreary robe of grief
Comes like the Autumn's wither'd leaf,
'Tis then that men the passion seek
Of love, not obdurate, but meek;
And know the peace of its relief.
There's nought in life to man more sweet,
More kindly or more dear,
Than in adversity to meet
The sympathetic tear.
The sturdy oak with cypress twined,
While Spring-time yields its myriad charms,
And flow'ry leaves bedeck its arms,

Heeds not the soft caresses kind;
But when the Summer's scorching heat,
The Winter's blast, with driving sleet,
Shall parch or chill the far stretch'd field,
Its feels with joy the cypress shield.
'Twas ever thus: and will be so,
  So long as man shall tread the earth;
So long as fortune's smiles shall flow,
  And while his brow shall teem with mirth,
  He casts aside meek woman's worth;
But when grim time—when fickle fate
Shall blast his brow, 'tis then too late;
The gentle flow'r, man should protect,
Has sunk beneath his cold neglect.

The feast was o'er; the hall was clear'd;
The wine and mirth had disappear'd:
The bowl, the cup, so late endear'd,
Were lying dormant on the floor,
Mementos of a wasted hour;
The sun's first rays were streaming through
The casements with a lurid hue.

The brigand chief still keeps the board,
Nor utters sound, nor utters word;
A sense of evil in his eye
Seems to foretell that harm is nigh,
One of those dreams which seems to pry
Into the dim futurity,
And when the soul is near its end
The bars of fate asunder rend;—
That glance into the space ahead,
And see the empire of the dead;
But wo to him of fancy's flight
Should ghostly visions meet his sight—
But suddenly he lifts his head,
And hearkens to the hurried tread,
And tramping to and fro of feet,
While murmur'd sounds his senses greet.
They come; he grasps his iron sword,
And stands expectant by his board;
They reach the door now open wide;
"'Tis not a foe," he said and sigh'd:
But foremost spake the one who led,
"Our captive has escaped," he said.

"Then treason in the castle dwells;
Let every brigand quit the cells,
And to the hall unarmed come,
To see the traitor meet his doom;
Away; and when the whistle calls,
Be sure his blood shall stain the walls."
He ceas'd; and through the open door
He sought his daughter's fair boudoir.
"Come, 'rouse thee, maiden, and with me,
To see a traitor's penalty:
What ails thee, girl, that thou should'st quake
As if it were thy doom I spake;
Thy form is trembling as a leaf;
And now thine eyes seem dimm'd with grief.
It fits me now—'tis thus my mood
That thou should'st use to scenes of blood.
Come, follow me unto the hall,
That justice may be done to all."

The hall was fill'd; each brigand's gaze
Was fixed upon the chieftain's face;

They knew that eye so stern, so chill,
Possess'd the pow'r to read the will:
But each with conscious innocence
Abode his look with confidence.
He scann'd each face, each eye again;
But watch'd their working lips in vain.
How was it—'twas a mystery,
For he, himself, possess'd the key—
That from the dungeon, strong and barr'd,
The captive should escape the guard?
He knew that in the tower's walls
A secret passage downward falls;
But who could find the hidden slide,
Imbedded in the dungeon's side?
At length a thought flash'd on his mind,
And as a sudden gust of wind
Changes the hush to roarings wild,
He turn'd to where his beauteous child,
With beating heart, with eyelids bow'd,
Stood trembling 'fore the lawless crowd.
A strange contrast; the brigand chief,
And Beauty mourning, weigh'd with grief—

The dusky faces of the band—
The father clothed with stern command,
His giant form, his flashing eye,
Like a meteor from a clouded sky,
His overarching brow impart
The hell of passions in his heart;
And, as a vulture from its peak,
He frown'd upon his daughter meek.
The daughter with a trembling frame,
Bow'd down with grief, but not with shame;
And quiv'ring as the lily frail
When shook by storm and blustering gale:
Her rounded cheeks to whiteness froze,
As snowflakes on a blushing rose;
Her crimson lips made marble white,
Like toombstones in a moonlight night;
Her slender hands so firmly press'd,
To still the anguish in her breast.
Thus stood she 'fore the heartless chief,
A monument of beauty's grief.

The brigand for an instant stood
Before the scion of his blood;

Her quiv'ring form, her head declin'd
Made no impression on his mind—
To stone I would compare his heart
But that it oft hath a soft part;
More rather as a diamond bright,
Hard within, but shedding light—
He hearken'd to her throbbing breath;
But in the silence hover'd death.
He spake the doom, the doom was death.
When justice by such lawless breath
Shall be invok'd from off her throne,
To grant to all their lawful own,
Shall writhe the guilty wretch beneath
Her falchion, gleaming from its sheath;
But purity and innocence
Shall triumph, tho' with frail defence,
Despite of honied eloquence.
He spake; but ere the words were o'er
Fell Zella senseless on the floor.
She was a child of Nature, and
No more of grief could she withstand;

But as she fell one piercing shriek
Resounded to the castle's peak.
The father stood above his child;
His bright eye flashing stern and wild—
The Spanish poniard rais'd on high
To strike, "thus shall the traitress die."
But Justice interposed her aid,
The fiendish deed of guilt she staid.
The shriek, which like the swan's last note
Told life a moment was afloat,
Was borne to brave Lenardo's ear;
Then rush'd he on in mad career.

The shouts without rang loud and high,
And petrified each brigand's eye;
The clash of arms resounded through
The halls and galleries anew.
Still nearer sounds the tramp of feet;
Still nearer sounds their senses greet;
Like a breaker hurl'd upon the shore,
Lenardo stands within the door;

And 'round about, behind him stand,
With grim aspect his faithful band.
"Unsheathe your swords," the brigand cried;
Their sheaths hung swordless by each side.
The blood rush'd back to Zella's cheek;
And, tottering forward, frail and weak,
She rested on Lenardo's arm:
And cried, "Saved! saved at last from harm:
But spare my father—" 'twas too late:
He rush'd upon his own sad fate.
But one more stroke—a stroke of death—
A score of swords then still'd his breath:
His dream of life would soon be o'er;
He grappled with the oaken floor;
Like whirling eddies in the tide
His eyes seem'd starting from his head;
He loudly gnash'd his teeth—he's dead!—
'Twas thus the guilty brigand died:
Unpardon'd, and unpardoning he died.



THE DREAM.

If sometime in the mighty realm of verse,
When shook by storm—when shook by blast;—
Oppress'd by winds adverse:—
When quiv'ring to its oaken mast,
Our country's cause shall 'rouse the minstrel's pen,
May vile disunion seek the harbor of its den.

The evening zephyrs in the gentle spring—
When night had closed the gates of day—
Came, borne on music's wing,
So soft from flowery fields away;
The dying embers in my grate essay'd
To cast one feeble ray, then sank to endless shade.

My troubled mind felt wearied, and I slept;
And as I slept, I dreamed a dream:
Cold shudders o'er me crept;
Grim, ghostly forms did 'fore me gleam;
I stood alone, it seem'd my native land—
A blacken'd, ruin'd mass—a dark, dark, dreary strand.

Two mighty armies did I see engaged;
The one came South, the other North;
With deadly weapons waged;
They met upon their mother earth;
And fathers to their sons were there opposed;
And brothers in the deadly grip of anger closed.

Came gloomy night, and frown'd upon their strife;
The sun went down, and rose in blood,
The work of death was rife;
And blood was shed, and flow'd a flood;
And war with desolation did preside;
The cry was "yield or die," and fighting still they died.

Came morn, came noon; yet none from battle fled;
Tho' mangled thousands laid a heap
Of groaning, dying, dead,
And tears of blood the earth did weep;
Yet still extermination's havoc peal'd,
And left their mouldering bodies tombless on the field.

Of all this mighty host but few remain'd;
Their arms sank powerless to the ground;
And, hideously strain'd,
Their eyes unearthly glared around.
They died defenceless—to wild beasts a prey;
And none were left to tell the horrors of the day.

Before me stretch'd as far as eye could stray,
A heap of human forms—all dead.
A ghastly light did play
Around the plain, glaring with red;
And vultures shriek'd aloud with putrid breath,
And hover'd o'er the dead; then fell as gorged to death.

And prowling wolves did roam the hideous place;
And wallow'd in a sea of gore:
They tore the flesh apace;
There was enough for all; and more:
There died a brother by a brother's hand;
And fathers with their sons did moulder on the sand.

Still changing did my heated fancy glide.—
The plants grew up, but bore no fruit;
Their stems with blood were dyed:
And ruin'd towns did moulder mute.
The air, the earth, the water all look'd grave;
And ships did wander manless on the deep blue wave.

And faction strove with faction to the death:
The tillers of the soil did make
The share into a sheath:
The fields were one vast bloody lake:
And I did see upon a cloud of flame
A hideous, hellish hag—Disunion was her name.

Like devils grinning o'er a dying prey
She smiled; but in her smile was death:
She blasted to decay
The fields and cities with her breath;
And whirlwinds issued from her wither'd face
Until each rock-ribbed mountain trembled to its base.

My brain did whirl in frensy; I was sad:
My soul did sicken at the sight
That men should thus be mad,
And gage their arms in deadly fight,
And shed the blood by nature made most dear.—
I turn'd away; and, grieving, sought another sphere.

THE STAR OF INTELLECT.

As I gazed upon the heavens I beheld a rising star,
'Twas a bright and brilliant meteor shining from the sky afar:
It was born within a moment; yet it died not at its birth;
But it shed its radiant brilliance to the utmost verge of earth.

When above the dim horizon it first lifted up its head,
And its scarlet and its golden on the other stars were shed,

All the sky was in commotion which could glow
the greater light,
But their stores were all exhausted, and they left
it king of night.

Then away with freedom roaming through the
spangled milky-way,
It rose higher in the heavens, and then journey'd
far away;
And the brightest of the meteors, as it took them
in its track,
Were but specks beside its glory—were but spots
of darkness black.

And it left its brilliance glowing in its many-wind-
ing trail,
Like a glance of Heaven's glory peeping through
the ether veil:
And the stars that were behind it shed a double
ray of light,
Which they borrow'd from their monarch as it
pass'd them in its flight.

And the maiden loves to ponder on the twinkling
of that star;
And the soldier seeks its solace as he journeys to
the war;
For, unlike the gentle Venus, or of Mars the flashes
stern,
In its many varied colors all the others we discern.

And that star is ever beaming in its radiancy clear,
With its scarlet and its golden blended in its mad
career:
And my spirit, fill'd with joyance, seeks to grasp
one straggling ray,
And embosom it forever from the glaring light of
day.

Oh! I gaze upon its brilliance, and could gaze for-
evermore,
Still enchanted with its beauty 'till my dream of
life was o'er:
When my soul unto the Heavens shall away from
earth repair,
I will meet that star so lovely—I will meet it in
the air.

CITY AND COUNTRY.

I HIE me from the city now,
To rest in peace my fever'd brow
Beneath some spreading willow bough,
  Where peace forever reigns.
The souls of men, ambition blind;
The parting smile so coldly kind;
And city's strife I leave behind!—
  All thinking of their gains.

And fashion's plumages so gay,
Which primp'd-up maidens there display;
And beggars loitering in the way,
All mingled into one—
The tramping to and fro of feet;
The choking sense of sultry heat,
Are in the city's busy street,
Where silence ne'er was known.

The city's throng, in heat so poor,
Is beautiful by art to lure;
But Nature, goddess of the pure!
In sweet communion dwells
In flowery fields forever green,
When zephyrs calmly, soft, serene,
Waft incense to their worship'd queen
From sweetly scented cells.

Loved Nature, charmer of my soul!
Thy empire is from pole to pole;
E'en where the foaming billows roll,
Lashing the sinful world;

As if they would the arts defy
Casting their briny spray on high,
Unto the far-stretch'd silent sky;
Then, thundering back, are hurl'd.

Give me the country's wholesome air,
When morning in her robes so fair
Arises from her moisten'd lair,
Far off behind the hills,—
The carolings of songsters sweet,
Which with the dews of morning greet
The soul, in joyful strains replete,—
And gentle, rippling rills.

What joy to stray at break of day;
And catch the sun's first rising ray;
And watch the dew-drops melt away,
So softly dropping down;
And see the mist, like to a shroud,
Enveloping the mountain proud,
'Till far above it hangs a cloud,
And glistens like a crown.

No smoky veil obscures the night:
But Heaven's harbingers so bright
Smile softly from their realms of light,
  And twinkle in the air:
No rattling, rolling of the dray,
But sweet contentment's silent sway
Has shed its calm—drove care away,
  'Till all is sweet and fair.

Trudge on, ye sons of paltry gain!
Enjoy your pleasures—all is pain
Where dust and dirt supremely reign,
  And knowing no release—
Seek comfort in the motley crowd;
But here the pride of wealth is bow'd:
The woods, the fields proclaim aloud
  That all is peace, peace, peace.

FRIENDSHIP.

A PRICELESS jewel is true friendship rare,
Seen glittering isolated in the wilds
Of an uncultivated, desert waste,
A bright and sparkling diamond gem of night,
Resplendent in the lustre of its hue.
To gain forever, and embosom in
His breast, one true, one solitary friend,
Mankind starts on the pleasing pilgrimage;
Now on the stormy shore tempestuous thrown;
Now buffetting the billows of the world:
Now o'er his head the breakers burst their roar;
Yet still he passes harmless on his way
To seek the only comfort of his life;

For what is life without one friend to share
The ebbs and flows of fickle fortune's tide?
Again he speeds along impetuous,
And drives the beasts of envy from their lairs:
In vain the birds of prey shriek from the air:
Their wailings all but render thrice more dear
The power of the distant, desert gem.
Then, blinded by the spell of flattery,
He clutches, as he thinks, the long-sought gem
And clasps it to his heart in gladsome pride;
And while ~~posterity~~ and wealth remain
'Twill ever break upon his flatter'd sight,
Glittering with affection's steady light;
But when grim time shall have bedimm'd his brow,
And cluster'd o'er his head its chilling dew;—
When wealth, the bauble of a tainted earth,
Shall scatter'd be unto the mammon world;—
And when adversity shall, in her course
Of sorrow, through the rich abodes of man,
Have yielded him of abject poverty
An ample due—then will he wistful turn
Unto his fondly-cherish'd bosom friend,

And seek within its sparkling radiance
For sympathetic condolence, to bid
Him hope, and sternly battle fate's decree:
But vainly will he seek that diamond gem;
For with prosperity has fled his friend.
Now, while his aged brow with gloom's o'erspread,
Will flash upon the simple, wo-struck wretch
The anguishing conviction that, instead
Of the true jewel from the desert gem,
Which still shines brightly in the distance far,
And sheds its radiant lustre, as a star
Glists through the misty screen of darkness vague,
He has for years hugged to his bosom close,
And wasted all his wealth upon its shrine,
An *ignis fatuus*, which, when the clouds
Of threatening ruin gather'd thickly round,
And when the fog of stern adversity
Had in a mantle drear of blasted hopes
Enveloped him, stole softly from his breast,
And left his aching bosom void of hope;
Then silently departed on its ways
To lure another victim to despair.

THE BROKEN HEART.

I FOLLOW'D in the trail of one
  Whose pinions light were furl'd,
Whose spirit to its home had gone,
  And left this wicked world.
The church-bell melancholy chimed
  Its loud and solemn strain,
While to its beatings slowly timed
  The footsteps of the train:
Still swept the trailing mourners by,
And dimm'd with tears the gazer's eye.

It was a silent, sleeping spot,
  Where was the new-made grave,

A golden, moss-embosom'd grot,
Where weeping willows wave:
Here, scatter'd round, old, hoary tombs
The moss of time amass;
And o'er their crumbling sides there plumes
The rankly-growing grass;
The rust of ages had effaced
The epitaphs that friends had traced.

When twilight's spreading drapery
Betoken'd coming e'en,
I stood hard by a willow tree,
And gazed upon the scene:
They placed the coffin in the ground,
And, when upon the dead
They dropp'd the earth with dismal sound,
A silent tear I shed:
And then there echoed through the vale,
A youthful maiden's weeping wail.

The earth they sodded o'er the grave;
Then turn'd the mourning maid,

Who lov'd the living, youthful brave,
Nor dying, did it fade.
She pass'd me, clothed in sable guise,
A solemn, touching sight;
Her drooping lashes fringed her eyes,
Like noonday tinged by night:
And from those orbs of brilliant hue
Fast flow'd down drops of pearly dew.

Her form for earth was far too fair,
Rounded in rich relief;
And on her neck hung down her hair,
Dishevel'd by her grief:
And from her lips she murmur'd low
The moans of blasted love,
Which, smother'd forth, incessant flow
Unto the youth above:
Her every dream of joy had fled—
All center'd in the absent dead.

Her lover dead at e'en she'd sit,
And gaze on vacancy;

Her eye, now dull, with sorrow lit,
Had lost its energy.
She loved but now that hope was gone,
She'd drain her eye-lids bare;
Her spirit's soul she knew was lone—
All given to despair:
Could ever grief like this survive,
When sympathy no aid could give?

No human heart, no mortal frame
Could bide such lingering pain—
The higher mounts the fiery flame
To sooner droop again:
The dove that parts its mate, will sigh
Awhile disconsolate:
But soon its tears of grief 'twill dry,
Then woo another mate;
But woman's grief will last till death
Shall still in peace her burning breath.

When Autumn drear had spread her screen
O'er nature's flowery face,

I came unto the village scene,
  I sought the sacred placc:
And when unto the tomb I came,
  And read the words indent,
I saw engraved the maiden's name
  Upon the monument.
It needed not of mystic art
To read the tale of a broken heart.

THE DARK NIGHT.

THE sun lay just above the hills,
  Casting his gorgeous robe of gold
Far o'er the fields and rippling rills,
  And tinged the tops of castles old.

Awhile he lay and cast his rays
  More brilliant for the coming dearth;
For night would soon exert her sway,
  And shed her gloom o'er prostrate earth.

Then downward quickly in despair
  He hides his face from mortal view:
Now darkness hovers through the air—
  Unfolds his shroud of sable hue.

O dreary night! no twinkling stars,
No blushing moon, now yield their light;
But darkness reigns—forever mars
The peaceful pleasures of the night.

Still onward speeds he o'er the land,
Leaves desolation in his sweep;
And lightly with his magic wand
Closes the drowsy lids in sleep.

A sigh for thee, bright, beauteous moon,
Now shrouded from my longing view;
And yet another for the noon,
And for the morning bathed in dew.

A dreary, solemn sound of wo
Comes moaning through the heavy air,
And measures out its accents slow,
Like the smother'd sobbings of despair.

Thick, heavy clouds of darkness hang
O'er city, land and sea in gloom;

The ocean with its boist'rous clang
Seems like a midnight, groaning tomb.

No light beams from the heavenly grot,
Save here and there a single spark
Breaks from some farmer's lowly cot,
To make the darkness still more dark.

What deeds of darkness, deeds of blood,
The murderer on his victim's trail,
Despairing manhood seeking food,
Are hid beneath thy dismal veil.

The throbbing brows by anguish toss'd,
Tho' smiling midst the multitude,
By seeming placid, life exhaust,
Find refuge in thy solitude.

Wander, ye ghosts, ye restless souls;
The curtain of your life's unfurl'd,
Crime-blazon'd on eternal scrolls;
'Tis meet such forms should be thy world.

Cold shudders o'er my spirit creep,
And parch the fountains of my breath:
This silence seems not that of sleep;
But rather like the hush of death.

A SHEET OF PAPER.

LET me, fair, snow-white sheet, thy mystic read,
The story of thy life,
Ere thou shalt to the world with fancy speed,
Ere thou art doom'd to strife.

Oh! what a world of happy thoughts condense
Around thy former fate!
Now stretch'd before me in thy innocence,
With form so delicate.

Let wiser men unfold their mighty strains,
Or fools thy beauty blot;
But I will bear thee free from awkward stains,
And ponder on thy lot.

Perchance a rag within the gutter laid,
But some poor ruffian pick'd;
Since thou wert fondled by some gentle maid,
Then from her chamber kick'd.

Who knows but that when in thy former state,
Once woven in a sack,
Thou wast encircled round some monarch great,
Or cloth'd some beggar's back?

Or yet perchance, within thy fond embrace
Some swan-like, snowy neck
Thou didst encircle with a lovely grace,
And some fair maiden deck.

What boots it what thou wert? to me thou art
For aye a virgin sheet,
Fit partner for the secrets of my heart,
So silent and discreet.

I love thee when thy form is deck'd with love,
Sweet messenger of thought!

To me thou art then gentle as a dove
By beauteous angels brought.

Yet not immaculate, thou hast the lines
Of trouble on thy brow:
Mysterious destiny! thus fate entwines
Its marks on sheets of snow.

BEAUTY.

We love to gaze upon the rose,
With festal view,
Where modesty, where beauty glows;
And brush the dew
From off its leaves; and softly close
Its rich, ripe lips so bright,
In crimson light,
Its petals slight
From weather and from blight,
From envy and from jealous eyes;
And then to greet,
As it doth, spreading upwards, rise,
The perfume sweet;
Enraptur'd meet

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The essence of a thousand sighs.
We love the rose; for in its cells,
'Mid perfum'd smells,
There ever dwells
Rich Beauty with her spells,
Entrancing, witching, magic spells.

We love the sunset in the eve,
When new-born spring
O'er nature, over earth doth weave
Its flowery wing—
An angel of redeeming grace,
Redeeming earth from Winter's chill embrace.
We love the sunset with its rays,
Its radiant tinge,
Like golden fringe
Reflected from a distant blaze—
The gentle, soothing light,
That beams so bright,
That spreads along the sky—
The deep, blue silent sky—
Its variegated colors clear

With rich transparency;
Then silently,
Like lengthen'd echoes seeming near,
Its heavenly splendors disappear;
And, fix'd in gaze,
It leaves the eye as lost in maze.
We love the sunset in the vale,
The sun's last trail;
For Beauty spreads the golden veil,
The azure-tinted varied veil,
The rich, and rare, and radiant veil.

Music, music with its strains
Of melody,
Melodious from its secret veins,
So merrily
With swelling numbers haply chains
The list'ning soul
With pleasant, sweet control—
In rapture lets the spirit roll;—
Orchestral strains,
Like hurricanes,

First sounding in the distance far,
Harmonious stealing through the air
With liquid notes;—
So softly floats,
As mellow-sounding bells
From curtain'd cells,
Sweet melody from bird-like throats—
Then nigher, nigher,
Higher, higher—
Now is loose the number'd bar—
Like martial notes of war,
It swells out boldly on the breeze,
Mounts high in air,
With wellings rare;
Then doubles o'er a cloud,
That's floating on so proud:
And downward bends,
To earth descends
With soothing, solemn sounds:
In exstacy my heart rebounds
With joy and peace.
For me will music never cease

To give surcease;
And while its strains in action move
I yield my soul to lasting love;
For from its cells,
In close embrace
Peeps Beauty's face
With all her spells,
Her witching, magic spells.

We love to gaze upon the bright,
The angel-like
And lovely maid, with sweet delight;
Her radiant beauties strike
Upon the heart
With pleasing art,
And stirring pleasures dart
Through all the channels of the frame
With passion's flame,
With soul-entrancing, fiery flame:
We bend, we bow beneath her rays;
And rapturous gaze
Upon the love-light of her eyes;

In spotless purity
We idolize;
We love, and, worshipping, we die:
'Tis meet we thus should yield our breath,
'Till, doom'd to death,
We sink beneath the bursting load.
The maiden bright
Is Beauty's fix'd abode,
A paradisial site,
A heavenly home, with angels for her light.

HEILRICH HALL.

THE feast was gay in Heilrich Hall;
The wine and mirth did flow like rain:
And all was joy, for but that night
The lord had wed the lady Jane.

A thousand lights did shed their light,
A thousand songs did swell the air;
And all was joy to see the lord,
And by his side the lady fair.

His armor flash'd and gleam'd with gold,
And pleasure teem'd upon his brow;
And all was joy, the old lord smiled,
Like sunshine on a wither'd bough.

The lady Jane was robed in white,
And blushes mantled o'er her face;
And all was joy, to see the bride
Bedeck'd with Beauty's smiling grace.

The bridal wreath was on her brow,
And diamonds sparkled on each hand:
And all was joy; the lord had wed
The loveliest lady of the land.

She wed the old lord for his wealth,
She wed him for his acres broad;
But far away young Roderick Gray
Her heart had ta'en with him abroad.

A thousand forms kept merry time,
And waltzed along so proud and tall;
And all was joy, the lady smiled,
For she was queen of Heilrich Hall.

She whirl'd unheeded through the waltz,
And with a stranger sought the lawn;

While all was joy, a murmur rose
That lovely lady Jane was gone.

The feast is o'er in Heilrich Hall,
And tears are flowing down like rain;
And all is grief; for the old lord
Has lost the lovely lady Jane.

They sought her in the lofty halls,
They sought her in the woods around;
They search'd three days, they search'd three nights,
But lady Jane was never found.

The lamp lights gloat along the walls,
And in their golden sockets gleam;
And all is grief, to see the lord
Roam o'er the hall as in a dream.

The guests have fled from Heilrich Hall!
They left the old man with his cane,
And all his grief; a piteous sight,
The old lord seeking lady Jane.

With gait unsteady still he seeks,
And wanders up and down the brook;
He roams again the forest wood,
And pries into each shaded nook.

His form is bent, his brow is pale—
The work of ages in a night:
And all is grief; no more shall he
Behold his lovely lady bright.

The feast was high in Heilrich Hall,
When to a vessel in the bay
There fled an erring, guilty pair;—
'Twas lady Jane and Roderick Gray.

The storm blew loud with angry breath,
And lash'd the vessel with its spray;
It struck! it sank! and thus the death
Of lady Jane and Roderick Gray.

GENIUS.

FANCY urges, reason lingers,
Meditating on her fingers
Of the flowing,
And the glowing
Of the tide of public feeling;—
On so dilatory stealing,
All its tardiness revealing,
And its fear of life concealing;
Until Genius lightly jetting,
All its gems together linking
With its bright and brilliant thinking,
With no flushes, with no blushes,—
Plodding reason oversetting;
From its fountain upward gushes,
Ever onward madly rushes.

Fancy saunters through the flowers,
Through the roses, through the bowers;

Softly welling,
Gently swelling
Through the realm of rare romances,
Over gardens lightly dances,
Casting here and there its glances,
Teeming fresh from sunny trances
With its tiny wreaths of roses;
But through fields of golden tresses,
Proudly stalking, Genius presses,
Culling gems of rarest splendor;
In the field of life reposes,
Mingling feelings soft and tender:
Homage never doth it render.

Fancy, as a child who's smiling,
All its future fate beguiling,
With its twinkling,
And its tinkling,
Lightly flowing, cometh leaping;
Culling flowers softly sleeping,
From their mossy bowers peeping;
But, with mighty pinions sweeping,

Genius grasps the golden treasures,
Weaves a chaplet for the season
From the mines unknown to reason—
Polish'd than the snow-drift whiter,
Bears them off to gladden'd pleasures.
Fancy is the feeling lighter;
Genius is the passion brighter.

Fancy! Fancy! thou art tender,
While with genius all is splendor:
As the fountain
From the mountain
Thou art welling, gaily twining:
Rich with beauties thou art shining,
All the sweets of life combining;
In a rosy bed reclining,
Light and pleasant are thy slumbers.
Genius! Genius! with thy glory,
Never ancient, never hoary;
Thou art joyous, sweetly pleasant
With thy mighty, magic numbers;
And thy thoughts are ever crescent
On the Future, Past, and Present.

CLARAWAY.

In the soothing hour of night, when the stars were twinkling bright,
I sat lonely, with me only, in the moonbeams' mellow ray;
Of my lov'd one was I dreaming, her each token 'fore me beaming,
Glisten'd freshly to my sight, all her loveliness was teeming;
And I wept o'er every gift, stretch'd before me as they lay,
For my lost Claraway.

'Twas when nature was austere, in the Autumn time of year,
When the flowers in the bowers had all moul-der'd to decay;

When the turtle broken-hearted call'd its mate that had departed,
And in plaintives low and clear, told its happiness was thwarted;
That I warbled in a sigh, a soft melancholy lay
For my lost Claraway.

First I sang the carol slowly in accents soft and low,
But then quicker and still quicker did I chant my roundelay;
And my bosom full of grieving, fell to beating and to heaving
With an overweight of wo which my fancy was conceiving,
For an image on the table led my spirit off astray
For my lost Claraway.

Then I ponder'd on the face, and the lineaments did trace,
Which were planted, as I chanted to the evening silver-gray,

In my bosom young and tender, with their soft and witching splendor;
And my homage to each grace of the picture did I render;
Then I ceased my gentle lay, and it echoed far away
To my lost Claraway.

Then a radiant cloud of light saw I floating on so bright:
It descended as it wended through the glittering milky-way,
To the turrets old and hoary with its splendor and its glory.
And its edges were as white as ever teem'd in fabled story,
And as charming, and as innocently charming as a ray
From the eyes of Claraway.

Still it downwards slowly came, shedding out its
brilliant flame,
Then it whirling and it twirling in the radiance
of its ray,
'Till it hover'd o'er my chamber, in the fragrance
sweet as amber
From the cypress at my frame, which did, twining
upwards, clamber,
Where full many a happy day have I sweetly
pass'd away
With my loved Claraway.

Then so gently from the cloud came a warbling
sweet and loud;
And it thrill'd me, and it fill'd me with a feeling
soft and gay;
For the music o'er me stealing to the ceiling came
a-pealing,
And the warbling from the cloud to my sadden'd
soul revealing
That the melody I heard was from her so far
away,
From mine own Claraway.

"Let thy sadden'd soul rejoice," said the happy, happy voice,
"And thy sadness be to gladness in this moment changed away;
I have watch'd thy midnight dreaming when the silver queen was beaming,
And thy spirit's only choice was unto thy fancy teeming,
And the zephyrs bore away thy soft melancholy lay,
To thine own Claraway.

"I was floating through the skies, when thy sad, heart-rending sighs
Came resounding and rebounding on the pinions of a fay;
And then quickly to my master I sped onward fast and faster,
And unfolded to his eyes thy despairing and disaster,
Then he bade me haste away, and thy faithful soul convey
To thine own Claraway.

"Come, and follow me, thy love, to the myrtle groves above;
In Elysian fields of vision you may ever, ever stray;
And 'mid scenes of crystal splendor our unbroken vows we'll render:
There no troubles will commove thy pure spirit, meek and tender."
Here the warbling died away, and my voice did then essay
Thus to answer Claraway.

"Yes, I'll follow thee, my love, to the myrtle groves above,
Where each token, vows unbroken, shall be harbor'd from decay;
Where sweet melodies are ringing, and the angels all are singing,
Where the messengers of love their pure offerings are bringing;
There away unto the skies will I journey far away
With mine own Claraway.

"Oh! what rapture will be there as we hover on the air;
Ever flitting, never sitting, will we pass the live-long day:
There will be no solemn sorrow, neither anguish for the morrow,
But the pleasures of the air from the angels will we borrow;—
I still chanting in my lay all my gloom and wo away
With mine own Claraway."

By my casement was I leaning, looking forth upon the scene,
When so brightly and so lightly came the vision and the lay;
But my bosom then conceiving a foul, filthy tone of grieving
That the singing and the sheen were my heated fancy's weaving;
I did murmur in dismay, "tis but mockery I survey,
Not mine own Claraway."

"Be thy meager soul abhor'd, for the vile, distrusting word
Thou hast spoken, has now broken all the links of love away;
And the bolts shall all be riven that thy Truth and Faith had driven,
For the soul that can distrust cannot ever enter Heaven:
Now return unto thy dreaming and thy melancholy lay;
Thou hast lost Claraway."

Then the radiant cloud of light slowly wended through the night;
And then quicker did it flicker as it floated far away;
And the night grew dark and dreary, and my soul grew weak and weary;
And the moon grew dim for shame, leaving me with midnight dreary;
And the rustling of the breeze at my window seem'd to say,
"Thou hast lost Claraway."

Oh! I shudder at the thought what Distrust has on me wrought;
For so solemn, like a column, from my casement far away
I am gazing, broken-hearted, where the cloud of light departed;
And a moaning wears my spirit, now my hopes have all been thwarted,
And in tones like molten lead I still hear an echo say,
"Thou hast lost Claraway."

THE END.

